

Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity

(NOFO): FY 2016 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Anniversary Program

Honoring Senators Robert Dole and Thomas Harkin

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAPEC-16-026

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.415

Key Date/Application Deadline: May 23, 2016

Program Description/Executive Summary:

The Professional Fellows Division in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' (ECA) Office of Citizen Exchanges invites proposal submissions from U.S. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501 (c) 3 for the FY2016 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Anniversary Program Honoring Senators Robert Dole and Thomas Harkin (FY2016 ADA Anniversary Program) supporting professional exchanges between the people of the United States and their counterparts in other countries to promote inclusive education for children and youth with disabilities. Utilizing fellowship models and institutional linkages, this Program will provide professional development opportunities for individuals and organizations aimed at strengthening institutional knowledge and individual expertise, enhancing outreach capabilities, and honing strategies to develop policies and practices that will increase inclusive quality education in their communities and countries.

Applicants may submit only one proposal under this competition. If multiple proposals are received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared ineligible and receive no further consideration in the review process. It is the Bureau's intent to award one cooperative agreement for an estimated total amount of up to \$500,000. Please see section B. Federal Award Information, below, for additional details.

A. Program Description:

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries...; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

A.1 Purpose

In recognition of International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2015, President Obama stated: “The United States has long been a leading voice for the rights of persons with disabilities, and we join the international community in expressing our support for them in all they do and in recognizing them as the valuable members of society that they are. This year, as we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) — landmark legislation that helps ensure the places that make up our shared national life truly belong to everyone — we also recognize that protecting the rights of those with disabilities is not just an American ideal, but a cornerstone of our work to ensure human rights around the globe.” Extending opportunities to disabled and disenfranchised people around the world is a 21st-century policy priority for the U.S. Department of State. It is also a goal of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) to ensure that individuals with disabilities have opportunities to actively participate in Bureau-sponsored programs.

Given the importance the United States places on embracing diversity, ending discrimination, removing barriers, and upholding the rights, dignity, and equal opportunity for all people both within the U.S. and around the world, the FY16 ADA Anniversary Program supports the aims of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which was created to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by persons with disabilities. The ADA Anniversary Program specifically honors the long term work of Senator Robert Dole and Senator Thomas Harkin dedicated to implementing the ADA and supporting and empowering individuals with disabilities of all ages.

CRPD states that persons with disabilities should be guaranteed the right to inclusive education at all levels, regardless of age, without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, and children with disabilities shall not be excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education on the basis of disability. Despite global calls for action and legal and legal frameworks for inclusion there is still more that needs to be accomplished to protect and uphold all children and young people’s right to an inclusive quality education. The ADA Anniversary Program was developed to highlight the importance of educating students with disabilities and creating programs, policies, and support systems to ensure inclusive learning environments.

To advance these important aims, the FY16 ADA Anniversary Program will support disability rights advocates, policy makers, government officials, educators and other individuals serving persons with disabilities who are focusing on inclusive education to exchange ideas, overcome barriers, strengthen institutional capacity, and enhance resources. The Program will ultimately help improve the ability of governments, policy makers, educational professionals, primary and secondary schools, support organizations, and communities to provide individuals with disabilities equal access to educational opportunities.

A.2 Goals

The overall objectives of the FY16 ADA Anniversary Program are to:

1. Remove barriers to national priorities, community opportunities and resources in order to support inclusive education for students with disabilities;
2. Support the ability of individuals and organizations to serve as effective disability advocates to promote inclusive quality education for students with disabilities;
3. Promote specific policies and programs from the national to local level involving multiple stakeholders that will enable governments, educators, civil society, volunteer groups and relevant institutions to implement inclusive education practices in schools and communities as well as serve as a catalyst to scaling up inclusive education in a local jurisdiction or country;
4. Ensure that people with sensory disabilities, intellectual and physical disabilities, cross-disabilities, and their families and communities benefit from the transformational power of international exchanges; and,
5. Build or expand sustainable networks or partnerships of individuals and organizations serving people with disabilities, particularly in the field of inclusive education.

A.3. Program Details

ECA anticipates awarding one (1) cooperative agreement of up to \$500,000 to support the FY16 ADA Anniversary Program to create regionally-focused, meaningful, and innovative professional exchanges for individuals working on inclusive education issues such as inclusive education curricula, teacher training; accessible technologies and built environment for students; support structures for students with disabilities; advocacy; public outreach; or related policy initiatives. Participants of this exchange program may be affiliated with non-governmental organizations; volunteer groups or community resource centers; relevant national, regional or local government offices; universities or schools; or private sector entities with specific interests in promoting inclusive education for students with disabilities.

The FY16 ADA Anniversary Program must be a two-way exchange involving both U.S. and foreign participants and the U.S.-based and overseas exchange program should be reciprocal in nature. Foreign participants (foreign fellows) will travel to the United States for a professional fellowship, an individually tailored placement at an appropriate host institution which will be four to six weeks in length.

All foreign fellows will reconvene at the end of their fellowships for a workshop/seminar in Washington, DC to share the results of their fellowships, discuss future plans, and benefit from perspectives of experts in the field of inclusive education.

The overseas exchange component or ‘outbound program’ for U.S. participants (U.S. fellows) should be approximately two weeks long and build on the expertise and achievements of foreign participants during their fellowships, addressing specific challenges and action plans the foreign fellows have identified, while expanding the capacity of organizations to advance disability issues through international exchanges. U.S. fellows will be competitively selected from the U.S. fellowship host institution – and will usually have been a mentor or supervisor for the foreign fellow.

Applicants to administer the FY16 ADA Anniversary Program should strive to maximize the number of participants and the length of the in-person program components at the given funding levels. As general guidelines, ECA recommends an approximate ratio of two to three foreign participants to one U.S. participant and a minimum of 20 foreign participants to be hosted in the U.S. as part of the exchange and approximately ten outbound U.S. Fellows to travel subsequently to the country of the foreign fellow they hosted. Applicants who engage public and private partners for programming support, and employ other creative techniques to increase or stretch funding dollars will be deemed more competitive than those that do not, under the Cost Effectiveness and Cost-Sharing criterion.

A.4. Program Responsibilities

ECA Bureau’s Level of Involvement

Please note that in a Cooperative Agreement, the Bureau is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. The Professional Fellows Division anticipates working closely with the award recipient to ensure that all aspects of individual projects support the FY16 ADA Anniversary Program’s goals and objectives. The Office of the Special Advisor for International Disability Rights may also provide guidance on this Program.

ECA activities and responsibilities for this program include:

1. Participation in the design and direction of all program activities;
2. Approval of key personnel;
3. Approval and input on program timelines and agenda;
4. Providing guidance in the execution of all program components;
5. Review and approval of all program publicity and other materials;
6. Approval of hosting institutions;
7. Approval of the final selection of participants;

8. Approval of changes to participants' proposed project;
9. Approval of decisions related to special circumstances or problems throughout duration of program;
10. Assistance with J-visas and SEVIS-related issues;
11. Assistance with participant emergencies;
12. Liaison with relevant U.S. Embassies and country desk officers at the State Department particularly in terms of recruitment, selection, and web-based publicity efforts;
13. Issue participants DS-2019 forms;
14. Enroll participants in the Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) for the duration of the program, issue health benefits identifications cards, and provide instructions on host claim forms;
15. Work with the award recipient to publicize the program through various media outlets and ECA's social media and other websites; and
16. Monitor and evaluate the program as necessary, through site visits or debriefing sessions.

The award recipients responsibilities include the following:

Award recipient's responsibilities for the overseas administration of the FY 2016 ADA Anniversary Program:

1. Design an inclusive recruitment strategy that targets individuals meeting the eligibility requirements outlined for the ADA Anniversary Program;
2. Develop recruitment and selection procedures that support ADA Anniversary Program goals and provide for a merit-based, open competition for participants. The award recipient will work closely with ECA on the development and implementation of selection criteria for both foreign and U.S. participants and keep ECA and the relevant Embassies informed about the application review process;
3. Arrange interviews for semi-finalists. Interviews for program models should be conducted solely in English;
4. Administer an Institutional TOEFL or an equivalent language-based competency assessment to evaluate the English language abilities of the semi-finalists at the time of the interview;
5. Work with ECA and the Embassies in participating countries to procure U.S. visas for foreign participants including the collection of biographical data required to complete the DS-2019 form and secure a J-1 visa;
6. Work directly with foreign embassies of participating countries to secure visas for U.S. participants;
7. Work with ECA to enroll foreign and U.S. participants in the ECA-sponsored Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE);

8. Create a Web presence using adaptive technology as needed to serve as a communication platform among participants, ECA, involved Embassy staff, and program hosts for the duration of the cooperative agreement period. Communication should include: assisting finalists in securing J-1 visas, answering questions on programmatic issues, including, but not limited to, fellowship placements, program responsibilities and expectations, travel, accident and sickness benefits; posting programmatic materials; conducting a pre-departure orientation; and facilitating communication among newly selected finalists and host communities prior to their departure to the U.S.; and,
9. Adapt recruitment, selection, and other programmatic materials and activities to accommodate individuals with disabilities.

Award Recipient's Responsibilities for the U.S.-based administration of the FY16 ADA Anniversary Program:

1. Identify U.S. non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and public or private institutions interested in participating in the FY 2016 ADA Anniversary Program as host entities for foreign fellows;
2. Create guidelines and guidance materials for U.S. hosts that clearly identify roles and responsibilities;
3. Arrange international and domestic round-trip travel for participants from their home cities to U.S. host institutions;
4. Conduct a comprehensive orientation in the U.S. for newly arrived participants prior to the beginning of their program;
5. Develop and facilitate professional enrichment activities during the fellowship experience that emphasize the goals of the ADA Anniversary Program and deepen participants' knowledge of the U.S.;
6. Monitor participants and the performance of hosting institutions for the duration of the program;
7. Facilitate individual follow-on projects carried out by foreign participants, including collaboration with the U.S. host institution to support these efforts;
8. Adapt programmatic materials and activities to accommodate individuals with disabilities;
9. Evaluate, in close consultation with ECA, the program and its impact on the participants and their communities during their stay in the U.S. and after they return to their home countries;
10. Manage financial aspects of the program (including timely disbursement of participant stipends, housing allowances, accident and sickness benefits, hosting agreements, and other activity costs) and promptly report any irregularities in the budget or spending to ECA;
11. Participate in a cooperative agreement orientation meeting with ECA (in person, by telephone, or other means) to be held at a mutually convenient day and time for the award recipient and ECA;

12. Conduct an end-of-program seminar or workshop for all foreign participants in Washington, DC, including opportunities for professional sharing of fellowship results and future plans as well as sessions led by experts in the field of education for individuals with disabilities;
13. Report programmatic, financial, and statistical information to ECA including a brief monthly email update outlining general programmatic activities conducted during the past month and anticipated programmatic activities to be conducted the following month;
14. Respond fully and promptly to requests for program information from ECA; and,
15. Ensure compliance with the terms of the Cooperative Agreement with ECA, including, but not limited to, submitting timely financial and program reports and proper budget oversight.

A.5. Program Components and Definitions

1. Program Participants

Participants must be current and potential leaders or advocates in the public, non-governmental or private sectors with a stated commitment to serving disability populations. Given that the focus of the program is on education, teachers, education administrators, policy makers, representative of parent associations or other stakeholders in the educational process as it relates to individuals with disabilities would be eligible candidates. Applicant organizations must make every effort to actively recruit and include individuals with disabilities.

Eligibility requirements:

- Emerging or established leaders in government, civil society, or the private sector who have a clear commitment to serving disability populations and demonstrated expertise in issues related to providing inclusive quality education to students with disabilities;
- Mid-level professionals in the approximate age range of 25 to 45 years old who, at a minimum, have two or more years of professional work experience;
- Demonstrated proficiency in both written and oral English that enables him or her to perform sufficiently in a U.S. workplace; level of English should be verified by the award recipient;
- Self-directed and able to work effectively in a cross-cultural setting; and
- Genuinely motivated to develop an individual project of their own selection that will benefit young people with disabilities and promote greater inclusive education in their region, country or community.

Applicants should plan to recruit qualified participants from eligible countries in two of six geographic regions including Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, the Near East and North Africa, South and Central Asia, and the Western Hemisphere, ensuring

participation of at least two participants representing different sectors per country. See Section 4.k. for a list of eligible countries from each of the six regions.

2. Partner Organizations

Applicants responding to this NOFO must identify any U.S.-based and any foreign-based institutions and individuals with whom they are proposing to collaborate to implement the FY 2016 ADA Anniversary Program and describe any previous cooperative activities with these institutions.

Applicants should demonstrate institutional capacity in countries and regions overseas, whether through their own resources or through partnerships with other organizations or institutions. Proposals must demonstrate capacity both within the United States and overseas to recruit and secure effective and appropriate participants and host institutions for the ADA Anniversary Program. The Bureau will look favorably on proposals that include letters of commitment from possible host or partner organizations under the Institutional Capacity and Track Record review criterion.

3. Project Activities

Projects should include placement of foreign participants in carefully identified fellowships in public, non-governmental, and private sector organizations where they will work with U.S. counterparts on areas of mutual interest. Placements for the FY16 ADA Anniversary Program should focus on issues related to inclusive education. Examples of potential fellowship placements for foreign fellows include non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in advocacy or service provision; legislative/government offices related to education at the national, state or local levels; schools or educational institutions; or private businesses. In general participants may be focusing on work areas such as educational curricula reform/development and accessible technologies, teacher training and support, advocacy or policy development and implementation, among others. Topics to examine might include attitudinal changes; policy development; ensuring inclusion through early childhood care and education; inclusive curricula; teacher training and education; or resources and legislation.

U.S.-Based Fellowship Components for Foreign Fellows

The award recipient will design and implement the U.S.-based fellowship components for foreign fellows that are each four- to six-weeks in length. Key program elements of the U.S.-based fellowship component must include:

1. A virtual “pre-departure orientation” (PDO) in the home country before departure for the United States;
2. A “program orientation” upon arrival in the United States;
3. A substantive fellowship placement that is tailored to each foreign fellow’s work/interests and is at a minimum four weeks in length;
4. An individual project (action plan) for each foreign fellow based on the fellows’ stated goals and agreed to by the host institution in advance of the start of the fellowship;

5. Upon conclusion of the fellowship placement, participation in a joint workshop/seminar to share fellowship results and future project plans and interact with other U.S. experts on disabilities education;
6. A debrief with U.S. Embassy representatives upon return to home country;
7. A plan for post-fellowship engagement with the foreign fellows; and
8. A program evaluation.

Program activities in the United States for foreign fellows should also, if possible, include a volunteer/community service element. Also, every effort should be made for the foreign fellows to engage with a range of American citizens regarding their work and their home country, such as through community/school presentations and media interviews.

Fellowship placements. The award recipient must secure, preferably at least a month in advance of the foreign fellows arriving in the United States, a substantive and appropriately-tailored fellowship placement that is a minimum of four weeks in length. The purpose of the fellowship placement is to provide foreign fellows with a professional development program that includes direct experience with the day-to-day workings of a U.S. organization and the opportunity to form professional relationships with American colleagues.

Proposals should discuss how the award recipient will recruit and select U.S. fellowship placement institutions. To ensure that each foreign fellow has a substantive professional experience, each fellowship placement should involve the commitment of a designated host/supervisor/mentor who understands the goals and objectives of the FY 2016 ADA Anniversary Program. Proposals that secure one fellowship placement per participant during the exchange – rather than multiple, short-term placements with different U.S. organizations – will be deemed more competitive under the Program Planning and Ability to Achieve Objectives review criterion. While some group activities may be appropriate, site visits where the foreign fellows have only a brief glimpse of a variety of organizations should be kept to a minimum.

Foreign-based Fellowship (Outbound Program) Components for U.S. Fellows

The award recipient will design and implement outbound programs that are approximately two weeks in length for U.S. fellows to travel to the target countries of their foreign fellow counterpart. The outbound programs should be substantive, and should build upon issues, activities, and program models explored during the U.S.-based fellowship with a view to supporting the action plan developed by the foreign fellow while in the U.S. The program should allow the U.S. fellows to conduct joint programming with the foreign fellows and their colleagues, and directly support U.S. public diplomacy objectives and the ADA Anniversary Program goals of building sustainable and lasting professional partnerships. Proposals should describe how the

American outbound components, to the degree possible, will support the foreign fellows' individual action plans.

U.S. fellows will be competitively selected from the U.S. fellowship host institution – and will usually have been a mentor or supervisor for the foreign fellow.

U.S. participants should be exposed in meaningful ways to government programs and policy issues, organizational and community-based practices and programming, adaptive strategies, and inclusive approaches of their foreign counterparts. Program activities should focus on providing both U.S. and foreign participants substantive professional development experiences with direct applicability to their everyday lives.

4. Program Guidelines

4.a Participant Recruitment and Selection

The award recipient will be responsible for recruiting and selecting qualified individuals from throughout the target countries for the foreign fellowships. Selection of U.S. fellows for the outbound portion of the exchange should be from the U.S. host organizations and serve to complement and augment action plans of foreign fellows developed during the U.S. fellowship. Proposals that maximize the number of participants by minimizing administrative costs and providing significant cost-share will be considered more competitive under the cost effectiveness and cost sharing review criterion.

Participants are defined as those who travel under cooperative agreement funding from their country of origin to a designated exchange country. Since problems sometimes arise that keep individuals from participating, at least one alternate per country and host institution should also be selected. Foreign participants should be selected through a merit-based, competitive process in consultation with the Public Affairs Section of the relevant U.S. Embassy. U.S. participants should also be selected through a merit-based, competitive process per guidelines above and in consultation with the program office in Washington.

Unless an organization has its own presence in the target country(ies), an in-country or regional partner organization should be designated to coordinate participant screening, selection, and orientation prior to their departure for the United States. While the Public Affairs Section at the U.S. Embassy and the program office should be involved in participant selection, responsibility for coordination and implementation lies completely with the award recipient. Proposals should include details on the recruitment process and selection criteria for both the foreign and U.S. groups. Additional information on eligible countries can be found in Section 4.k.: Eligible Countries of the ADA Anniversary Program.

4.b. Visas and International Travel

The proposal must address the applicant's willingness to comply with all federal travel regulations regarding the use of U.S. government funds including the Fly America Act and their willingness to work with ECA and U.S. Embassies overseas to procure U.S. visas for the foreign representatives of participating partner organizations involved. As required, applicants will also need to facilitate the procurement of visas for U.S. staff representatives and participants traveling overseas. Note: since the visa process can take up to two months, depending on the country, ECA strongly recommends gathering all relevant participants and delivering it to ECA, in order to assist with J-visa process, well in advance of the planned departure date. All foreign participants must travel on a J-1 visa issued by the relevant U.S. Embassy.

4.c. Pre-Departure Orientation

The award recipient will be responsible for conducting a pre-departure orientation for both foreign and U.S. participants prior to their departure from their home countries. Topics should include an overview of travel and logistics, airport arrival information, and visa regulations. A review of the program schedule and discussion of cultural norms should also be included. A comprehensive orientation for foreign participants upon their arrival in the United States is also highly recommended. It is possible that many, if not most, of the foreign participants will never have been to the U.S. before. Their orientation should provide not only information on the program schedule and logistics but also cover life in the U.S. such as information on the local community, cross-cultural issues, standards of conduct, disability rights, including background on the Americans with Disabilities Act and relevant aspects of the situation for individuals with disabilities in the U.S. etc. Project goals, performance measurements, participant expectations and responsibilities should all be reviewed.

4.d. Project Planning

Exchanges for foreign participants should be four to six weeks in length. The fellowship placement for foreign participants should offer practical information and experience that will help them more effectively address the needs of their communities and countries and carry out their defined priorities and action plan. Participants will be exposed to professional practices and environments through job shadowing, internships, workshops, site visits and other activities designed to provide an in-depth view of how their counterparts operate in the U.S. Emphasis should focus broadly on inclusive education and educational policy as it relates to individuals with disabilities.

It is equally important for participants to have opportunities to meet a wide variety of Americans through social and cultural experiences designed to help the participants better understand the U.S. and the diversity of its people. In support of the cultural component of the exchange, host institutions are strongly encouraged to arrange home-stays of any

practical length for the participants, especially if they contribute to understanding of disability issues and accommodating special needs.

Exchanges for U.S. participants may be two to three weeks in length and, in addition to the focus on their foreign partners' action plan and work, should include elements in the professional, cultural, and social realms in the partner country. Plans for the U.S. participants' exchange should be at the same level of detail as that of the plan for the foreign participants. The Bureau's policy on Support of Diversity should be integrated into all aspects of the project including but not limited to participant selection, program materials, and training methodology. Please refer to guidance in PSI under —Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines.

4.e. Project Management Plan

The proposal must include a simple project management plan for the life of the project that lists, in table format, outputs (major events or tasks, logistics, management, oversight) performed by the grantee organization or partners, timeframe, and the person or group responsible.

4.f. Media Outreach

Proposals should include plans to work with ECA's Office of Public Affairs and Strategic Communications in developing a coordinated media and public outreach strategy to increase the program's visibility, and raise the public awareness of the ADA Anniversary Program. The award recipient will need to incorporate the Department of State seal and acknowledge the support of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs on all of its educational and outreach materials and its website.

4.g. Re-entry Debriefs

As possible given funding levels, the proposal will include plans for an in-country re-entry meeting or debrief for all returning foreign participants. Dates of debrief should coincide with international arrival schedules to ensure limited domestic travel and good stewardship of federal funds. The award recipient should consult with the Public Affairs Section on the development of the program date and agenda. As funding allows, the award recipient may organize a debriefing session for the U.S. participants that should include both the ECA program office and U.S. Embassy staff. This could be conducted via a webinar or teleconference.

4.h. Alumni Programming

The proposal must include an acknowledgement to comply with ECA's General Policy Guidance on Alumni Outreach/Follow-on and Engagement provided in the PSI. Proposals including specific alumni follow-on and programming ideas targeted to the goals of the FY16 ADA Anniversary Program, and taking into consideration special needs accommodation will be considered more competitive.

4.i. Financial Management

In addition to providing a budget that complies with all the guidelines provided in this solicitation package, the award recipient will be responsible for budget oversight and management of all project activities, including participant costs and transparent arrangements of sub-grant relationships with partner organizations, if applicable. A proposal that clearly demonstrates the linkages between specific project components and budget line items will be considered more competitive.

4.j. Timelines

ECA anticipates the following timeline for the FY2016 ADA Anniversary Program.

- ☐ August 2016 Award recipient-ECA planning meeting in Washington, D.C.

- ☐ Fall 2016: Recruitment/Selection of foreign participants; preparation of participants' travel to U.S. (J-1 visas, program schedule, etc.)

- ☐ Winter 2016/17: Secure fellowship placements

- ☐ Spring 2017: Travel to the U.S. by the foreign participants for a four-six week U.S.-based program, concluding with a joint workshop at the conclusion of the U.S. portion to exchange lessons learned and present future action plans.

- ☐ Summer 2017: Planning for U.S. fellows' travel abroad (participant recruitment, selection, visas, program schedule, etc.)

- ☐ Summer/Fall 2017: Travel by the U.S. participants overseas for two to three weeks.

4.k. Eligible Countries

For participant recruitment, applicants should select eligible countries from two different geographic regions (according to the regional lists that follow), ensuring that at least two participants come from any one country. It is the expectation of the Professional Fellows Division that there will be a reasonably balanced distribution of participants between the two regions selected and that at least two countries per region will be represented.

The ADA Anniversary Program supports countries which have signed or ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Proposals that target countries or themes not listed in this solicitation will be deemed technically ineligible. No guarantee is made or implied that every country will have

participants. ECA reserves the right to amend or modify the list of participating countries should conditions change in the host country or if other countries are identified as priorities.

Countries eligible for participation in the FY 2016 ADA Anniversary Program are as follows:

Africa: Angola, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda

East Asia and Pacific: Australia, Burma, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand, Vanuatu, and Vietnam

Europe: Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Croatia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Moldova, Norway, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden, and Ukraine

Near East and North Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian Territories, Morocco, and Tunisia

South and Central Asia: Bangladesh, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan

Western Hemisphere: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Peru

B. Federal Award Information:

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under A. Program Description.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2016

Approximate Total Funding: \$500,000

Approximate Number of Awards: One

Approximate Average Award: \$500,000

Floor of Award Range: none

Ceiling of Award Range: \$500,000

Anticipated Award Date: August 1, 2016.

Anticipated Project Completion Date: December 31, 2017

C. Eligibility Information:

C.1. Eligible applicants: Applications may be submitted by U.S. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3).

C.2. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds: There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition. However, the Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's Circular 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

C.3. Other Eligibility Requirements:

a.) Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$130,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates making one award, in the amount of \$500,000 to support program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than four years' experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition.

b.) Technical Eligibility: All proposals must comply with the following or they will result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process:

- Eligible applicants may not submit more than one proposal in this competition. If more than one proposal is received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared technically ineligible and will receive no further consideration in the review process. **Please note:** Applicant organizations are defined by their legal name, and EIN number as stated on their completed SF-424 and additional supporting documentation outlined in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document.

D. Application and Submission Information:

Note: Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

D.1. Contact Information to Request an Application Package:

Please contact David Gustafson of the Office of Citizen Exchanges, Professional Fellows Division, ECA/PE/C/PF, SA-5, Third Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, (202) 632-6083; GustafsonDP@state.gov to request a Solicitation Package.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document which consists of required application forms, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation.

Please specify Program Officer Elisabeth (Elise) Wilson and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number located at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.

D.2. To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet:

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's website at <http://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding> or from the Grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov>.

Please read all information before downloading.

D.2a. Content and Form of Submission: Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The application should be submitted per the instructions under D.3p. "Application Deadline and Method of Submission" section below.

D.3a. You are required to have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a UEI number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a UEI number, access <http://www.dnb.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your UEI (DUNS) number is included in the appropriate box of the SF – 424 which is part of the formal application package.

D.3b. All proposals must contain an executive summary, proposal narrative and budget.

Please Refer to the Solicitation Package. It contains the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document for additional formatting and technical requirements.

D.3c. All federal award applicants must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) database in order to submit a proposal in response to an open competition on Grants.gov.

All federal award recipients must maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in www.SAM.gov until all program and financial activity and reporting have been completed. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted. Failure to register in SAM will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

D.3d. You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

- 1) Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.
- 2) Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

D.3e. In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

D.3f. If your organization is a private nonprofit which has not received a grant or cooperative agreement from ECA in the past three years, or if your organization received nonprofit status from the IRS within the past four years, you must submit the necessary documentation to verify nonprofit status as directed in the PSI document. Failure to do so will cause your proposal to be declared technically ineligible.

D.3g. **All ECA awards recipient organizations** must be registered with GrantSolutions by accessing www.GrantSolutions.gov. To register as a first time user of GrantSolutions, please scroll to the bottom of the home page and click "Getting Started-Request a User Account" at <http://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/home/customer-support/getting-started/>. Organizations that have previously used GrantSolutions do not need to register again. If the organization is not able to access the system, please contact GrantSolutions.gov Help Desk for help in gaining access.

Support for Grantee Organizations is available from 8 AM – 6 PM EST, Monday – Friday and can be reached at help@grantsolutions.gov or 1-866-577-0771.

Please take into consideration the following information when preparing your proposal narrative:

D.3h. Adherence To All Regulations Governing The J Visa

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is the official program sponsor of the exchange program covered by this NOFO, and an employee of the Bureau will be the "Responsible Officer" for the program under the terms of 22 CFR 62, which covers the administration of the Exchange Visitor Program (J visa program). Under the terms of 22 CFR 62, organizations receiving awards (either a grant or cooperative agreement) under this NOFO will be third parties "cooperating with or assisting the sponsor in the conduct of the sponsor's program." The actions of recipient organizations shall be "imputed to the sponsor in evaluating the sponsor's compliance with" 22 CFR 62. Therefore, the Bureau expects that any organization receiving an award under this competition will render all assistance necessary to enable the Bureau to fully comply with 22 CFR 62 et seq.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by recipient organizations and program participants to all regulations governing the J visa program status. Therefore, proposals should explicitly state in writing that the applicant is prepared to assist the Bureau in meeting all requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62. If your organization has experience as a designated Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor, the applicant should discuss their record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 et. seq., including the oversight of their Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of ECA will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program.

A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://j1visa.state.gov> or from:

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division
U.S. Department of State
SA-44, Suite 668
301 4th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20547

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

D.3i. Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines

Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of political, social and cultural life in the United States and abroad. "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity will enhance the program's goals and objectives and the participants' exchange experience. Please refer to the review criteria under the 'Support of Diversity' section of this document as well as the DIVERSITY, FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY section in the "Proposal Submission Instructions" document for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal.

Public Law 104-319 provides that "in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," the Bureau "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Public Law 106 - 113 requires that the governments of the countries described above do not have inappropriate influence in the selection process. Proposals should reflect advancement of these goals in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

D.3j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation

Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the project's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that your proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. The Bureau expects that the recipient organization will track participants or partners and be able to respond to key evaluation questions, including satisfaction with the program, learning as a result of the program, changes in behavior as a result of the program, and effects of the program on institutions (institutions in which participants work or partner institutions). The evaluation plan should include indicators that measure gains in mutual understanding as well as substantive knowledge.

Successful monitoring and evaluation depend heavily on setting clear goals and outcomes at the outset of a program. Your evaluation plan should include a description of your project's objectives, your anticipated project outcomes, and how and when you intend to measure these outcomes (performance indicators). The more that outcomes are "smart" (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and placed in a reasonable time frame), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. You should also show how your project objectives link to the goals of the program described in this NOFO.

Your monitoring and evaluation plan should clearly distinguish between program outputs and outcomes. Outputs are products and services delivered, often stated as an amount. Output information is important to show the scope or size of project activities, but it cannot substitute for information about progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of outputs include the number of people trained or the number of seminars conducted. Outcomes, in contrast, represent specific results a project is intended to achieve and is usually measured as an extent of change. Findings on outputs and outcomes should both be reported, but the focus should be on outcomes.

We encourage you to assess the following four levels of outcomes, as they relate to the program goals set out in the NOFO (listed here in increasing order of importance):

1. **Participant satisfaction** with the program and exchange experience.
2. **Participant learning**, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude. Learning includes both substantive (subject-specific) learning and mutual understanding.
3. **Participant behavior**, concrete actions to apply knowledge in work or community; greater participation and responsibility in civic organizations; interpretation and explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained; continued contacts between participants, community members, and others.
4. **Institutional changes**, such as increased collaboration and partnerships, policy reforms, new programming, and organizational improvements.

Please note: Consideration should be given to the appropriate timing of data collection for each level of outcome. For example, satisfaction is usually captured as a short-term outcome, whereas behavior and institutional changes are normally considered longer-term outcomes.

Overall, the quality of your monitoring and evaluation plan will be judged on how well it 1) specifies intended outcomes; 2) gives clear descriptions of how each outcome will be measured; 3) identifies when particular outcomes will be measured; and 4) provides a clear description of the data collection strategies for each outcome (i.e., surveys, interviews, or focus groups). (Please note that evaluation plans that deal only with the first level of outcomes [satisfaction] will be deemed less competitive under the present evaluation criteria.)

Recipient organizations will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

D.3k. Virtual Exchange Component:

ECA welcomes innovative ideas on how organizations can leverage appropriate mobile and/or online technologies to maintain engagement among exchange participants, encourage project collaboration and widen participation in the overall project to a broader audience. ECA strongly encourages organizations submitting proposals in response to this solicitation to suggest one or more virtual exchange components to complement the in-person exchange. The virtual exchange component(s) could come before, during and/or after the physical exchange. The objective for the virtual exchange component(s), defined as technology-enabled, sustainable, people-to-people, cross-cultural exchanges, is to augment the impact of the in-person exchange described in this solicitation. ECA encourages organizations to propose virtual exchange ideas that take advantage of ECA's existing web and social networking platforms, including our International Exchange Alumni space. Virtual exchange components would be coordinated with and approved by the ECA program office and U.S. missions abroad on a project by project basis.

D.3l. Communications Guidance for ECA Grant Recipients:

All ECA Grant Recipients must adhere to the requirements in [ECA's Communications Guidance](#) on the creation of program branding and attribution, websites, social media, and press.

D.3m. Please take the following information into consideration when preparing your budget:

D.3n. Applicants must submit SF-424A – “Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs” along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification.

D.3o. Allowable costs for the program include the following:

1) *Travel*. International and domestic airfare; airline baggage and seat fees; visas; transit costs; ground transportation costs. Please note that all air travel must be in compliance with the Fly America Act. There is no charge for J-1 visas for participants in Bureau-sponsored projects.

2) *Per Diem*. For U.S.-based programming, organizations should use the published Federal per diem rates for individual U.S. cities. Domestic per diem may be accessed at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287>. ECA requests applicants to budget realistic costs that reflect the local economy and do not exceed Federal per diem rates. Foreign per diem rates can be accessed at: <http://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp>.

- 3) *Book and Cultural Allowances.* Participants are entitled to a one-time cultural allowance of \$150 per person, plus a book allowance of \$50. Interpreters should be reimbursed up to \$150 for expenses when they escort participants to cultural events. U.S. project staff, trainers or participants are not eligible to receive these benefits.
- 4) *Consultants.* Consultants may be used to provide specialized expertise or to make presentations. Honoraria rates should not exceed \$250 per day per session. Organizations are encouraged to cost-share rates that would exceed that figure. Subcontracting organizations may also be employed, in which case the written agreement between the prospective grantee and sub-grantee should be included in the proposal. Such subawards should detail the division of responsibilities and proposed costs, and subcontracts should be itemized in the budget.
- 5) *Room Rental.* The rental of meeting space should not exceed \$250 per day per activity. Any rates that exceed this amount should be cost shared.
- 6) *Materials.* Proposals may contain costs to purchase, develop and translate materials for fellows. Costs for high quality translation of materials should be anticipated and included in the budget.
- 7) *Supplies.* Applicants may propose to use award funds to purchase supplies, such as computers and printers; supply costs should be justified in the budget narrative. Costs for furniture are not allowed.
- 8) *Working Meal.* One working meal may be provided during U.S.-based and foreign-based components. Per capita costs for working meals may not exceed \$45/person, excluding room rental and other overhead charges. The number of invited guests may not exceed fellows by more than a factor of two-to-one.
- 9) *Return Travel Allowance.* A return travel allowance of \$70 for each foreign participant may be included in the budget. This allowance would cover incidental expenses incurred during international travel.
- 10) *Re-Entry Debriefings or Meetings.* Costs related to providing foreign fellows a re-entry debriefing or seminar, if relevant, may include per diem, hotel accommodations, material development, and other related expenses.
- 11) *Health and Travel Insurance.* The award recipient will be responsible for working with ECA to ensure that both foreign and American fellows are enrolled in the ECA-sponsored Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE). The premium is paid by ECA and should not be included in the proposal budget. Applicants may include costs for travel insurance for both foreign and American fellows in the budget.

12) *Wire Transfer Fees.* When necessary, applicants may include costs to transfer funds to foreign-based partner organizations. Award recipients are urged to research applicable taxes that may be imposed on these transfers by host governments.

13) *In-Country Travel Costs for Visa Processing Purposes.* Visas for foreign fellows are provided by DOS and should not be included in the budget. Given the requirements associated with obtaining J-1 visas for ECA-supported participants, applicants should include costs for any travel associated with procuring visas, including travel for interviews, delivering or picking up passports, etc.

14) *Administrative Costs.* Costs necessary for the effective administration of the project may include salaries for employees, benefits, and other direct and indirect costs per detailed instructions in the PSI. Proposals should show strong administrative cost sharing contributions from the applicant, the in-country partner and other sources. Award recipient staff travel should NOT be included in the exchange participant numbers.

15) *Reasonable Accommodations.* Organizations should budget for the reasonable accommodations of participating individuals with disabilities. Proposals may allocate up to 7% of the total requested ECA award funds for this purpose.

16) *Washington, DC-based Workshop.* Allowable costs associated with the workshop to be held in Washington, D.C. following the fellowships are:

1. Travel to/from Washington, D.C.: Domestic travel to Washington, D.C., for the workshop including ground transportation to and from the airport to the conference hotel. ECA strongly encourages program plans that conclude with the D.C.-based workshop and sends foreign fellows home directly from the Washington area at the conclusion of this workshop.

2. Food and lodging for foreign fellows and award recipient staff (limited to two staff per organization) attending the Workshop.

3. Non-Workshop related activities: ECA strongly encourages the award recipient to incorporate additional programmatic time in the D.C. metro area (before or after the Congress), using the opportunity to arrange meetings with government agencies, national organizations, and other key stakeholders. Costs for ground transportation, lodging, meals, and miscellaneous expenses for all additional days/nights in the D.C. area should be included in individual proposal budgets.

- 14) *Alumni Activities.* Reasonable costs related to alumni activities may be included. The proposal must include an outline of any proposed follow-on activities. Proposals should also demonstrate how the award recipient organization will creatively utilize technology and online networking sites to enhance and amplify alumni programming.

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

D.3p. Application Deadline and Method of Submission:

Application Deadline Date: Monday, May 23, 2016

Method of Submission:

Applications may only be submitted electronically through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>). Complete solicitation packages are available at Grants.gov in the "Find" portion of the system.

PLEASE NOTE: ECA bears no responsibility for applicant timeliness of submission or data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via Grants.gov.

Please follow the instructions available in the 'Get Started' portion of the site (<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>).

Several of the steps in the Grants.gov registration process could take several weeks. Therefore, applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this NOFO to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov.

Once registered, the amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your internet connection. In addition, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

The Grants.gov website includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process, including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the "For Applicants" section of the website. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov website, well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system.

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission to:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800 -518-4726

Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; closed on federal holidays

Email: support@grants.gov

Applicants have until midnight (12:00 a.m.), Washington, DC time of the closing date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded to the Grants.gov site. There are no exceptions to the above deadline. Applications uploaded to the site after midnight of the application deadline date will be automatically rejected by the Grants.gov system, and will be technically ineligible.

Please refer to the Grants.gov website, for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation. Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from Grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Again, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals via the Grants.gov web portal to ensure that proposals have been received by Grants.gov in their entirety, and ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

D.3q. Intergovernmental Review of Applications: Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

E. Application Review Information

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas and State Department regional bureaus, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. All awards will be assessed for risk prior to their issuance. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

E.1. Review Criteria

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

1. Program Planning and Ability to Achieve Objectives: Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, adherence to the goals of the FY2016 ADA Anniversary Program, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. Proposals should demonstrate a realistic and achievable scope that fits within the budgetary and time parameters set forth in the NOFO. Proposals that secure one fellowship placement for each foreign fellow during the exchange rather than multiple, short-term placements with different U.S. organizations will be deemed more competitive under this review criterion. Proposals should clearly demonstrate a relevant work plan and how key project elements interrelate and how project objectives, especially the development of action plans by the foreign fellows, will be achieved through programmatic activities.

2. Follow-on Activities and Multiplier Effect/Impact: Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events. Program elements should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of longer-term linkages to achieve proposed goals.

3. Support of Diversity: Proposals should show substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Proposals should demonstrate and explain how diversity will be achieved in the different aspects of program administration and of program design, content and implementation, including recruitment, selection and placement of fellows. Applicants should demonstrate readiness to accommodate fellows with disabilities. Applicants should refer to the Bureau's "Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines" in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI).

4. Institutional Capacity and Track Record: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals. Proposals should include (1) the institution's mission and date of establishment; (2) detailed information about proposed partners including a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities; (3) an outline of prior awards, U.S. government and/or private support received, for programs of a similar nature; and (4) descriptions and resumes of key staff who will implement the program. The proposal should reflect the institution's expertise in the subject area and an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau grants as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will look favorably on proposals that include letters of commitment from possible host or partner organizations under the Institutional Capacity and Track Record review criterion. ECA will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

5. Project Monitoring and Evaluation: Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the project's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program.

Proposals should include draft evaluation instruments, such as surveys and questionnaires, plus a description of a methodology that will be used to link outcomes to original project objectives. The award recipient must be prepared to work closely with the Professional Fellows Division and ECA's Office of Evaluations to assure coordination of evaluation efforts as much as possible so as not to over-burden participants with redundant or overlapping survey instruments/questions.

6. Cost Effectiveness and Cost Sharing: The applicant should demonstrate efficient use of Bureau funds. The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. The proposal should maximize cost sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions. Proposals that maximize the number of participants by minimizing administrative costs and providing significant cost-share will be considered more competitive under the cost-effectiveness and cost-sharing review criterion.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

F.1. Award Notices:

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the Bureau's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer, and transmitted to the recipient's responsible officer identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the ECA program office coordinating this competition.

The following additional requirements apply to this project:

For assistance awards involving the Palestinian Authority, West Bank, and Gaza:

All awards made under this competition must be executed according to all relevant U.S. laws and policies regarding assistance to the Palestinian Authority, and to the West Bank and Gaza. Organizations must consult with relevant Public Affairs Offices before entering into any formal arrangements or agreements with Palestinian organizations or institutions.

Note: To assure that planning for the inclusion of the Palestinian Authority complies with requirements, please contact Elisabeth (Elise) Wilson, Bureau of Educational and

Cultural Affairs, Office of Citizen Exchanges – Professional Fellows Division, 202-632-6053, WilsonE@state.gov, for additional information.

F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following: Office of Management and Budget's Circular 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Effective December 26, 2014, replacing the previous circulars).

For a copy of the OMB circular cited, please contact the U.S. Government Publishing Office or download from the www.ecfr.gov website.

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants>.

<https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/pages/home.aspx>

F.3. Reporting Requirements: You must provide ECA with an electronic copy of the following required reports:

Mandatory:

- 1.) Additional performance reports shall not be required more frequently than quarterly or, less frequently than annually. Annual reports shall be due 90 calendar days after the grant year; quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer). A SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet must be submitted with all programmatic reports and can be found here: http://aopefa.a.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=20&menu_id=68. The complete report and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the Recipient as a *Grant Note* under the corresponding record for this Agreement in GrantSolutions.gov. For assistance, please contact the GrantSolutions Help Desk at 1 (866) 577-0771 (toll free for US callers) or by email at help@grantsolutions.gov. The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR can be accessed at: <http://www.dpm.psc.gov/>. Once a financial report has been approved by the Department, the Recipient must upload the approved report to [GrantSolutions.gov](http://Grantsolutions.gov), in the same manner specified for the programmatic reports. Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Agreements.

- 2.) A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration or termination of the award;
- 3.) A concise, one-page final program report summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award. This report should be e-mailed to: FFATAECA@state.gov. This one-page report will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's USAspending.gov website - as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.
- 4.) Quarterly program and financial reports highlighting all major activities undertaken during the grant period including program analysis and lessons learned.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to D.3j.. Program Monitoring and Evaluation information.

All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

F.4. Program Data Requirements:

Award recipients will be required to maintain specific data on program participants and activities in an electronically accessible database format that can be shared with the Bureau as required. At a minimum, the data must include the following:

- 1) Name, address, contact information and biographic sketch of all persons who travel internationally on funds provided by the agreement or who benefit from the award funding but do not travel.
- 2) Itineraries of international and domestic travel, providing dates of travel and cities in which any exchange experiences take place. Final schedules for in-country and U.S. activities must be received by the ECA Program Officer at least three work days prior to the official opening of the activity.

G. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Program Officer Elisabeth (Elise) Wilson, U.S. Department of State. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of Citizen Exchanges, Professional Fellows Division, ECA/PE/C/V, SA-5, Third Floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, 202-632-6053 (tel), 202-632-6492 (fax), WilsonE@state.gov.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this NOFO should reference the title and funding opportunity number listed at the top of this solicitation.

Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

H. Other Information:

Notice:

The terms and conditions published in this NOFO are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative. Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section F3. Reporting Requirements above.

Evan Ryan
Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State

March 23, 2016

